

What We've Heard From You

See our responses to questions posed by applicants, coordinators, and division contacts during the FY2012 Grant Outreach Calls, as well as other questions we have received.

Questions fall into the following categories:

- SF-424
- Application
- Eligibility

SF-424

I see this year that we must submit an SF-424, and I don't see the PLHD Program listed in the available programs at www.CFDA.gov. On items 12 & 13, I think those should be left blank as it is my understanding those are used when grants are advertised through grants.gov.

While we are requiring the SF-424 this year, this solicitation is **not** being advertised through grants.gov. As such, you do not have to fill out #11, 12 and 13 on the form. However, for general information purposes, our CFDA listing is **20.205**.

I see in the instructions that you want everything submitted electronically in Word and no PDFs, but the SF-424 is a PDF.

Please submit the SF-424 in its original PDF format. The application and attachments are to be submitted in WORD.

Application

I've read all the PLHD application materials related to your request for proposals but cannot find an application deadline anywhere. Am I missing something?

The deadline for submission to FHWA division offices is **January 6th**. However, it's important that you contact your PLHD State coordinator as soon as possible, as States may establish earlier deadlines so they can review your application prior to submitting them to FHWA.

Last year, States were asked to rank project submissions prior to submitting to FHWA. I've read through the project selection criteria and don't see that listed this year. Will States be ranking projects?

No. This year, we are asking applicants to substantiate their request by identifying their proposal in context of a Federal Land Management Agency's or Indian Tribe's strategic transportation goals and/or priorities. However, all applications must be submitted to State DOTs. State DOTs will review your application for technical sufficiency, as well as your capacity to implement the

funding proposal. They will work with you to make your application as competitive as possible prior to submitting applications to FHWA.

Since the project selection criteria have changed, and I'm identifying my project in context of my Tribe's strategic transportation priorities, can I just submit directly to FHWA?

No. By statute, only State DOTs can submit applications to FHWA. You may submit an application through the State as a sub-recipient. All project proposals must be consistent with State transportation plans. The State will not rank your application; however, they will review it for technical sufficiency, and provide technical assistance so that you can make your application as competitive as possible.

Now that the FY 2012 grant solicitation period is open, is it possible to inquire about an application we submitted last year that didn't get funded so that we can correct it in time for this year's submission?

Yes. If you submitted an application last year that was not funded, please contact Cindi Ptak, PLHD Program Coordinator, at cindi.ptak@dot.gov to discuss your application.

Will you be providing feedback to applicants that don't receive funding this year?

Yes, upon request. If you submit an application that does not get funded, please contact Cindi Ptak, PLHD Program Coordinator, at cindi.ptak@dot.gov for a post-award de-brief.

I see that only about half the amount of money is available for this solicitation. Will FHWA do another solicitation if more money becomes available?

No. We will be doing one solicitation for FY 2012 funds. Currently, there is approximately \$45,000,000 available for PLHD awards, as a result of a six month extension passed by Congress. Congress recently passed the "minibus," providing a full year's appropriation of funds; however, we have no contract authority past the six month extension. Should this change and we have full year funding, we will select projects totaling the full amount from this solicitation.

We've been asked to submit an application on someone else's behalf, which we would like to do. We are also going to be submitting an application on behalf of our own organization. How would FHWA view two requests from the same organizational entity?

Each application would be reviewed on its own merit, and ranked based on its individual competitiveness. However, since your organization would be taking on the administration of two projects within the same fiscal year, it would be important to articulate your ability to do so in each application. We look at the capacity of the applicant to implement projects in a timely manner.

Eligibility

Part of the statutory criteria identifies an opportunity for a visitor center “as determined by the Secretary.” Does that mean we need pre-approval by the Secretary?

No. Visitor Centers are eligible for PLHD funding. Please see “project selection criteria” for information regarding the necessity of a Visitor Center (and all funding requests) to fit into a specific Federal Land Management Agency’s or Indian tribe’s strategic transportation goals and/or priorities. In order to be competitive, please provide a sustainability plan that identifies maintenance and operations responsibilities over the lifecycle of the facility.

I see a question on the application that asks if we can obligate within one year. Our project may take longer than one year to begin. Is my project still eligible for funds and/or will it be competitive?

We understand that projects sometimes take longer than a year to obligate. This does not make your project ineligible; however, it may not be viewed as competitive as other projects that have everything in place to begin within a year. Please note that a new policy consideration this year is economic competitiveness and the capacity of a project to create jobs both near and long term. The sooner you can effectively begin your project, the more competitive your application.